



## INSIDE INDIA

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### USAID/India Celebrates World AIDS Day 2008

#### *HIV Photo Exhibit Opens at the American Center*

On Thursday, December 11, USAID, The American Center, The Karnataka Health Promotion Trust (KHPT), and the Avert Society opened a unique exhibit of two sets of photographs designed to highlight the lives of those affected by HIV/AIDS who suffer most from discrimination and stigma: female sex workers men who have sex with men (MSM); Orphaned and Vulnerable children (OVC); and People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV).

Photographer N P Jayan took the KHPT photos in July, August and September of 2008 in Mysore, Davangere, and Bagalkot. The photographs celebrate the lives of people who have been marginalized and discriminated against for years. With the support of USAID/India, KHPT



Photo: N P Jayan

reaches over 100,000 people with HIV prevention and care services across Karnataka and India. "While working with the HIV vulnerable communities in Karnataka, we have experienced that it is most important to provide victims of the disease with a sense of self-respect and individual recognition.

One has to fight against the stigma attached to the disease," said Vandana Gurnani, executive director, KHPT. "This exhibition is a tribute to the strength of the people we have been working with,"

Additional photographs, "Footprints of Change" by Anita Khemka, were also on display from the Avert Society, a bilateral project between the Government of United States and the Government of India designed to mitigate the spread of the HIV epidemic in the state of Maharashtra, by identifying hard to reach, marginalized, and vulnerable populations.

Four short films on HIV by renowned Indian filmmakers Mira Nair, Vishal Bhardwaj, Farhan Akhtar, and Santosh Sivan were also screened at the opening of the exhibition. The exhibition is open to the public and continues at the

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American Center, 24 Kasturba Gandhi Marg, New Delhi, through December. The KHPT photos are for sale.



Exhibition Photos by N P Jayan

## ***Toll-Free Helpline for People Living with HIV (PLHIV) Launched***

In an exciting Public Private Partnership (PPP), USAID and the Tata Business Support Services, one of the largest third party customer service providers in India, recently launched the *Hello+ Helpline*, a toll-free hot line that provides People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHIV) with access to confidential information and counseling from trained counselors on questions related to HIV/AIDS. This sixteen hour a day, multi-lingual service can also directly connect the caller to a qualified healthcare provider or NGO if needed.

## ***HIV Music Video Released***

Responsibility can be fun! That is the mantra of a music video launched by Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the National AIDS Control Organization (Government of India), and USAID in India. One-third of all new infections in India are in the age group of 15-

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24. Realizing that youth are at risk, but are also averse to being preached to, the universal language of music has been used to communicate and inspire the young people to take responsibility for leading the fight against AIDS.

## **USAID Recognized by Association of Energy Engineers for Energy Efficiency Work in India**

Mr. S. Padmanaban, Director and Senior Energy Advisor for USAID's South Asia Regional Initiative/Energy (SARI/E) was recently nominated by the Association of Energy Engineers (AEE), India Chapter, for the Energy Professional Development Award for his contributions to institutional capacity development in the energy efficiency field in India. He is to receive the award at a ceremony commemorating the National Energy Conservation Day in Kolkata. The Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) is a nonprofit professional society headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, with the goal of promoting "the scientific and educational interests of those engaged in the energy industry and to foster action for sustainable development." AEE has a network of 67 local and 73 international chapters comprised of commercial, industrial, institutional, governmental, energy services, and utility sector professionals. AEE Awards are presented to energy professionals who have achieved international, regional, or national prominence in their fields and are based on nominations by an AEE chapter or an officer of AEE.

## **SARI/Energy Hosts High Level Afghan Delegation**

The South Asia Regional Initiative for Energy (SARI/E) recently hosted a high level power sector delegation, led by the Afghan Deputy Minister for Energy and Water. SARI/E organized discussions with leading power sector institutions and policy makers on distribution franchise and other key corporate and commercial issues for the Afghan team to learn from Indian experience and move forward with their current power sector reform efforts.

The team had detailed briefing on implementation of the distribution franchisee operations at Bhiwandi Distribution Circle of Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Company Limited. The team met with State and Central Regulators to learn about various aspects of the power sector regulatory framework in India. The team discussed the possibility of a long term capacity building program for Afghan power sector personnel in Indian training institutions with the Indian Ministry of Power. Most of these Indian training institutions are supported by USAID/India under one of its bilateral assistance programs. The group also made site visits to distribution utilities to see state of the art technical systems.

SARI/E in collaboration with USAID/Afghanistan is working on establishing a trilateral Indo-U.S.-Afghan partnership for a long term capacity building program for Afghan power sector personnel in India. Initial discussions with both the Indian and Afghan counterparts, the Ministry of Power and Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, the Indian Embassy in Kabul, and the Ministry of Energy and Water, Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan have been very positive.

## **DRUM Supported Exchange Visit Completed Successfully**

An eight member team of rural eclectic utility experts, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development Utilities Program (USDA/RUS) just completed a two week long technical assistance mission in India. While here, the team met with USAID partners in the energy sector (Maharashtra State Electricity Distribution Co. Ltd) and Bangalore (Bangalore Electric Supply Company) to help them upgrade their standards and bring U.S. best practices to bear on the way Indian utility companies can improve safety, reduce losses, and improve the quality of electricity supply and customer service.